

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 7-10, 12-15, 21 and 28-49 are pending in the application, with claims 35, 40 and 45 being the independent claims. Claims 7-10, 12, 14, 15, 21, 28 and 29 are sought to be amended. Claims 1-6, 11, 16-20 and 22-27 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein. Without acquiescing to the propriety of their respective rejections, these claims have been cancelled to expedite prosecution. Applicants reserve the right to pursue these claims in one or more continuation applications. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and that they be withdrawn.

Allowed subject matter

Applicants acknowledge the allowance of claims 35-49 with appreciation.

On page 8 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 2-6, 16-20 and 23-27 contain allowable subject matter. In Applicants' prior Amendment filed June 24, 2004, these claims were amended into independent form to create allowed claims 35-49. Applicants accordingly have canceled claims 2-6, 16-20 and 23-27 above.

Objection to the Claims

On page 3 of the Office Action the Examiner objected to claims 2, 16 and 23 under CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claims 35, 40 and 45 respectively. Since claims 2, 16 and 23 are cancelled, the objection is rendered moot. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider these objections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 11 - 13, 15, 22, and 29-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,111,978 to Bolle *et al.* (hereinafter Bolle). For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 1, 11 and 22

Since claims 1, 11 and 22 are cancelled, this rejection is rendered moot.

Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 11 and 22.

Claims 12, 13 and 15

Claims 12 and 15 have been amended to depend from independent claim 35 that was indicated as allowed on page 8 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicants assert that claims 12 and 15, which now depend from the allowed independent claim 35, are also allowable. Hence, the rejection of claims 12 and 15 has been rendered moot. Claim 13 depends from claim 12, and thus is allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 12, 13 and 15.

Claims 29, 30 and 31

Claim 29 has been amended to depend from independent claim 45 that was indicated as allowed on page 8 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicants assert that claim 29, which now depends from the allowed independent claim 45, is allowable. Hence, the rejection of claim 29 has been rendered moot. Claims 30 and 31 depend from claim 29, and thus are allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 30 and 31.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7, 21 and 28

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 7, 21 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bolle in view of PCT Publication No. WO

87/06378 to Wheatley *et al.* (hereinafter Wheatley). For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 7, 21 and 28 have been amended to depend from independent claims 35, 40 and 45 respectively that were indicated as allowed on page 8 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicants assert that claims 7, 21 and 28 which now depend from the allowed independent claims 35, 40 and 45 respectively are also allowable. Hence, the rejection of claims 7, 21 and 28 has been rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 7, 21 and 28.

Claims 8 - 10

On page 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 8 - 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bolle in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,212,290 to Gange *et al.* (hereinafter Gange). For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 8 - 10 have been amended to depend from independent claim 35 that was indicated as allowed on page 8 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicants assert that claims 8 - 10 which now depend from the allowed independent claim 35 are also allowable. Hence, the rejection of claims 8 - 10 has been rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 7, 21 and 28.

Claims 14, 32 - 34

On page 7 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 14 and 32 - 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bolle. For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 14 has been amended to depend from independent claim 40 that was indicated as allowed on page 8 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicants assert that claim 14, which now depends from the allowed independent claim 40, is allowable. Hence, the rejection of claim 14 has been rendered moot.

As indicated above, claim 29 is allowable. Claims 32-34 depend from claim 29, and thus Applicants assert that these claims are also allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 32-34.

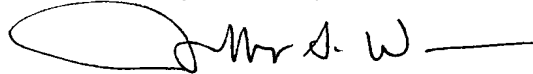
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mr. J. W.", with a large, loopy initial "S" or "J" at the beginning.

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